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THE

EVILS OF VACCINATION.

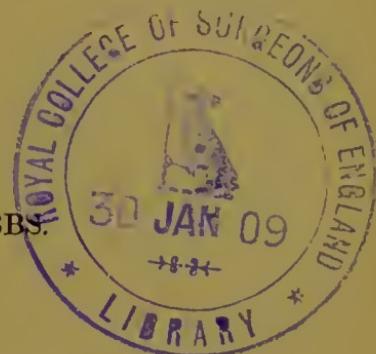


THE
EVILS OF VACCINATION :

WITH A

PROTEST AGAINST ITS LEGAL ENFORCEMENT.

BY
GEORGE S. GIBBS.



"Ce n'est plus le *medecin* qui peut et qui doit decider de *cette question importante*; mais uniquement *le bon sens*."

"This important question no longer can nor ought to be decided by the *doctor*, but simply by sound common sense."—A. Lutz, M.D., Cothen.

"If that freedom which is the birthright of Britons is destined to go down to succeeding generations, it must result from the prevalence of a lofty enthusiasm, an ardent attachment to liberty, and an incessant jealousy of the tendency of power to enlarge its pretensions and extend its encroachments."—ROBERT HALL.

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THE
EVILS OF VACCINATION.

IN 1853 an Act, popularly known as the "Vaccination Extension Act," was smuggled through Parliament,* which made compulsory, under a fine of twenty shillings, the vaccination of every child born in England or Wales after the 20th of August in that year.

In the House of Commons, on the evening of Thursday, March 6, 1856, "Mr. Cowper (President of the Board of Health) obtained leave to bring in a 'Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to vaccination.'"† On the evening of the succeeding Wednesday (in less than a week) he moved that the Bill be read a second time, when Mr. Barrow, M.P. for South Nottinghamshire, requested a postponement of the motion until after the Easter recess, as the Bill had reached the hands of members only that morning. Mr. Barrow's request being

* "I say this Act was *smuggled through Parliament*," writes one in the North, "because it is a fact, that Members of the House of Commons were actually not aware of its existence until they received notice requiring them to comply with its provisions."—*Durham Chronicle*, January 18, 1856.

† *Times*, March 7.

ably seconded by Dr. Michell, who denoueed the measure in forcible terms, it was acceded to.*

This Bill, based partially on the second report of the Epidemiological Society, sets forth, in its preamble, the existence of certain vaccination laws, and declares that “it is expedient that they should be consolidated and amended, and that the compulsory practiee of vaecination should be extended.”

How the compulsory practiee is to be extended we learn from the clauses :—

I. “The word ‘Child’ includes every person up to the age of *thirteen* years.” (Why *thirteen*?—in accordance with some odd theory of numbers?)

III. “This Act shall apply to England, and shall be in force from and after the 1st of January, 1857.”

XI. “The parent or guardian of every child born in England on or after the 1st day of January, 1857, shall, within *four* months, bring the child for vaecination to the public Vaccinator appointed in the Union, who shall thereupon vaccinate such child.”

XII. “Upon the *seventh*† day after the vaceination, the parent shall again bring the child for inspection, in order that the result may be ascertained and registered.”

XIII. “If a publie Vaccinator shall ascertain, on sueh inspection, that the vaccination has not been successful, he shall again vaccinate the child; and the parent shall bring the child for inspection on the *seventh* day after

* *Times*, March 13.

† The Committee of the Royal Jennerian Vaccine Institution state positively, in their Report for 1853, that it is *impossible to tell whether a vaccination is successful or not until the FIFTEENTH day after the performance of the operation*.—Admire the profound knowledge of legislatorial quacks!

such second vaccination, *and so on as often as need be*, until the child shall have been successfully vaccinated, or till a certificate of insusceptibility to vaccine disease, be given in the manner provided by this Act."

XIV. "Every public Vaccinator, within a week after the successful vaccination of any child, shall furnish to the Registrar a certificate" of the same; "and if any child shall, after three vaccinations at intervals of not less than two months, prove for the time insusceptible of vaccine disease, such public Vaccinator shall furnish to the Registrar a certificate of such insusceptibility: *Provided that no such certificate shall be in force for more than ONE YEAR from its date.*"

XVI. "The parent or guardian of every child in England (up to thirteen years of age), on or after the 1st day of January, 1857, who shall not already have been successfully vaccinated, nor had Small-Pox, shall, within four calendar months, bring the child to the public Vaccinator for the purpose of being vaccinated, and shall on the seventh day, &c."—as in Clause XII.

XXIII. "It shall be lawful for the managing committees of schools receiving aid from Government grants, the masters of workhouses, and keepers of lunatic asylums, and governors or keepers of prisons, to inquire into the vaccination of children attending such schools, or of the inmates of such workhouses, asylums, or prisons, respectively, *and to direct the vaccination of all such persons therein as they find unvaccinated.*"

XXIV. "It shall be lawful for the medical practitioner appointed by the emigration officer at any port to certify as to the health of the passengers or crew of any vessel carrying emigrants, to inquire into the vaccination of the said passengers or crew, and the emigration officer

*shall have power to require and provide for the vaccination of any persons found unvaccinated.”**

XXVI. “It shall be lawful for the *General Board of Health*, when Small-Pox is prevalent in any part of England, to issue special regulations and directions with respect to the steps to be taken for preventing the spread of the disease by *re-vaccination or OTHERWISE!*”

XXVII. “In the case of the death from Small-Pox of any child born since the 20th day of August, 1853, it shall be lawful for the Coroner to summon a Jury for the holding of an Inquest on the body of such child; and if it shall be proved that such child has not been vaccinated, the Jury shall find a verdict accordingly, and the Coroner shall notify such verdict to the Guardians or Overseers” of the Poor, “who may thereupon proceed against the parent or guardian” of the child “for the recovery of the penalty imposed by this Act.”

XXIX. “The parent or guardian of any child born since the 20th day of August, 1853, not having caused such child to be vaccinated, or not having procured a certificate of insusceptibility to vaccine disease, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty shillings: every person refusing or neglecting to comply with any requirement of this Act shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding *twenty shillings*, and in the case of a continuing refusal or neglect, to a penalty not exceeding **FIVE SHILLINGS**.

* The Epidemiological Society, in their second Report, recommended such an “amendment” of the law as to make it retrospective for “all adults in England and Wales, whether natives or foreigners.” Mr. Cowper does not yet venture so far, *mais ce n'est que le premier pas qui cout*, thirteen is more than half twenty-one; paupers, lunatics, and prisoners form a large proportion of “all adults,” *et facilis, &c., &c.* Note, too, the insidious grasping phraseology of Clause XXVI. An *undefined* is very near an *unlimited* power.

LINGS for every day during which such neglect shall be continued: (sufficient to reduce to pauperism a vast majority of the people !) Whosoever shall wilfully obstruct any person acting under the authority or employed in the execution of this Act, or shall wilfully violate any regulation or direction of the General Board of Health issued under this Act, shall be liable, for every such offence, to a penalty not exceeding five pounds."

Now, there are many persons who object to the practice of vaccination on various grounds; and first are those who regard the introduction of a disease into the system, under the pretence of keeping it healthy in futurity, or, indeed, under any pretence whatever, not merely as a gross absurdity, but as a direct violation of the law of God; for if the soul's health be the primary object of care, the blessed gift of bodily health is surely not to be treated with contempt.

But there are others who object to vaccination on the ground that it is not what it pretends to be, viz., a protection against Small-Pox. They say that a glance at the varying mortality from this disorder in successive years is sufficient to prove this proposition. For instance, the deaths in London from Small-Pox were,—

In 1838*	...	3817	In 1845	...	909
„ 1839	...	634	„ 1846	...	257
„ 1840	...	1235	„ 1847	..	955
„ 1841	...	1053	„ 1848	...	1617
„ 1842	...	360	„ 1849	...	518
„ 1843	...	438	„ 1850	...	498
„ 1844	...	1804	„ 1851	...	1066

* In this year Small-Pox was *epidemic* in London, and generally throughout England.

The deaths in all England and Wales fluctuate in the same manner.

Their evidence does not end here. The Returns of the Small-Pox Hospital show that during a period of eleven years, out of an aggregate number of 4055 patients, 2167, or more than half, had been vaccinated; and, further, that in a particular year, 1852, 570 out of 800, or more than two-thirds of the patients admitted, had been vaccinated. Neither do vaccinated patients invariably suffer less than unvaccinated, for Dr. Gregory (who was for some fifty years Physician to the London Small-Pox Hospital) informs us that out of 298 vaccinated patients admitted into the Small-Pox Hospital in 1838, there died no fewer than 31.* As, however, a single case is sometimes more striking than many pages of figures, I will give one in the form of a "Report of a case of vaccination (Cow-Pox,) and variola (Small-Pox), occurring simultaneously, by John Clarke, M.R.C.S. and L.A.C., Kenilworth:"

"Having read in the *Lancet*, a short time since, the report of an interesting case of vaccination and variola in an infant, I am induced to relate a very similar case, which occurred in an adult,

"E. C——, aged 22, who had been vaccinated in her infancy, was *re-vaccinated* by me, December 6th. On the fourth day no small red spot was visible, consequently I concluded either that the vaccine disease would be retarded in its course, or would not be produced at all. In two or three days afterwards I was called in a great hurry to see this patient; I found her in bed, very much alarmed, suffering intense pain in the

* *Eruptive Fevers*, p. 215.

loins. On the third day an eruption appeared, which in two days assumed a somewhat livid aspect, the throat at the same time being highly inflamed, and so constricted that it was with the greatest difficulty she could swallow even fluids. She likewise aborted, and had considerable haemorrhage afterwards. On inspecting the eruption on the vaccinated arm, *I discovered two genuine vaccine vesicles*, such as you would expect to see from primary vaccination; this was about the twelfth day after the insertion of the lymph. *I was certainly surprised and somewhat dismayed* at seeing the worst form of variolous disease occur simultaneously with that of the vaccination: suffice it to say, this poor woman died after an illness of six days.”*

It is true that the mortality from Small-Pox is less, much less, than formerly; but to place this result entirely to the credit of vaccination is to leave out of view that Small-Pox is an *epidemic disorder*; that it was epidemic in this country some fifty years since, and for a long time previous to that; that it was kept in existence by the practice of inoculation; and that its fatality was fearfully increased by the barbarous method of treatment, thus described by a biographer of Sydenham:—“The usual mode of dealing with this then fearfully virulent disorder, as with eruptive fevers generally, was as opposite as could well be imagined to the dictates either of nature or common sense. The unhappy patient was loaded with bed-clothes; lest one refreshing breeze should fan his burning frame, the curtains were drawn closely round; whilst, under the notion of the existence of a putrescence and dissolution in the blood, he was all

* *Lancet*, Jan. 1853.

the time plied with a round of stimulants and cordials, to say nothing of the perhaps less potent, but more disgusting ingredients with which good care was taken that they should be sufficiently charged, described altogether by a nearly contemporary physician, as ‘ Veniee treacle, Virginian snake root, zedoary, saffron, volatile salt of hartshorn, powder of viper’s flesh, and the like.’ ”

Vaccination is objected to as the source of other diseases than vaccineinia or Cow-Pox ; these diseases being permanent, and consequently hereditary and deteriorative of the general public health. The holders of this opinion find its confirmation in a comparison of the mortality of this country, where vaccination has been voluntary, with that of a country where it has been for many years rigidly enforced. For instance, “in Austria, if it be known to the police that a person is unvaccinated, they have authority to take him forthwith, and see that the operation is performed.”*

The following table shows the result of this rigid enforcement in a proportionate mortality very much greater than in this country, and in some instances twice as great :—

Town or Country.	Year.	Population.	Deaths.	Proportion per 1000.
London	1851	2,373,799 ...	55,254 ...	23·3
England and Wales...	„	17,922,768 ...	395,933 ...	22
Liverpool.....	1850	258,236 ...	7,500 ...	29
Manchester	„	228,433 ...	6,680 ...	29
Birmingham	„	173,951 ...	4,056 ...	23·3
Leeds	„	101,343 ...	2,502 ...	24·6
Dublin.....	1851	258,361 ...	6,931 ...	26·8
Cork	„	85,745 ...	2,002 ...	23·3
Limerick	„	53,448 ...	1,418 ...	26·5
Galway	„	34,057 ...	789 ...	23

* *Epidem. Society's Report*, p. 6.

Town or Country	Year.	Population.	Deaths.	Proportion per 1000.
Lower Austria.....	1850	1,538,047 ...	54,970 ...	35·7
Upper Austria.....	"	852,323 ...	23,646 ...	27·7
Styria	"	1,006,971 ...	30,534 ...	30·3
Illyria	"	738,180 ...	34,630 ...	46·9
Trieste.....	"	82,597 ...	3,283 ...	39·7
Tyrol	"	859,706 ...	25,276 ...	29·4
Bohemia	"	4,409,900 ...	170,432 ...	38·6
Moravia	"	1,799,838 ...	55,637 ...	30·9
Silesia	"	438,516 ...	12,123 ...	27·6
Gallicia	"	4,555,477 ...	140,329 ...	30·8
Bukowina	"	380,826 ...	11,070 ...	29·0
Dalmatia	"	393,715 ...	9,442 ...	23·9
Lombardy	"	2,725,740 ...	92,550 ...	33·9
Venice	"	2,281,732 ...	76,150 ...	33·3
Military Frontiers without the seven Burghs.	{ "	1,009,109 ...	44,610*... 44·2	

The French official returns relating to the conscription show this deterioration in an equally striking manner :— “ Of the conscripts for the seven years 1831 to 1837, 459,000 were exempted as infirm, and 504,000 recognised as serviceable. For the seven years 1839 to 1845, 491,000 were exempted, and 486,000 only declared capable of service. Thus, in the first period, out of 100 conscripts forty-five were infirm, or dwarfs ; in the second, fifty were in that sad position.”†

The cause of this spreading debility, and its intimate connexion with vaccination, may be seen by the subjoined testimony of medical men.

Dr. Shew (American) writes,—“ It is maintained that vaccination, while it affords a good degree of protection from variola, yet renders the system more liable to other

* *Epidem. Society's Report.*

† Dr. Bayard, *Influence de la Vaccine*, p. 26.

diseases. It is affirmed, also, that other diseases are introduced into the system at the same time with the Cow-Pox. Long-continued and troublesome skin diseases appear to follow it, and, in not a few cases, the child seems never to enjoy good health after it has been performed." In another place :—" By questioning closely, we not unfrequently find that children never enjoy good health after vaccination, however firm it might have been before." Again :—" I have been for years so much a disbeliever in vaccination that I would not be willing to have it practised upon a child of my own. I did not, however, know that there was high authority, even among the profession, for doubting the utility of the practice, till the winter of 1850-51. At this time, Professor Bartlett, a very candid and able man, and lecturer at that time on the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the University of New York, quoted, in his remarks on the causes of pulmonary consumption, on the authority of two French writers, Barthez and Rilliett, the following facts in regard to vaccination. In 208 children that had been vaccinated, 138 died of tubercular consumption, and seventy of other maladies. In ninety-five that were not vaccinated, thirty only died of tubercular consumption, and sixty-five of other diseases. The circumstances connected with the two classes, the vaccinated and the unvaccinated, were as nearly as could be the same."

The editor of the *Medical Times** writes, respecting the mortality in Glasgow, in 1853 :—

" Among the diseases affecting the adult population the tubercular will be found, as usual, to have been the most fatal. *By consumption alone there were 2490 persons carried off. This dis-*

* January 1, 1854, p. 75.

temper has greatly increased during the last 60 years. In 1775, the population of Glasgow amounted to 43,000; the deaths by phthisis were only 161, or affecting one out of every 269 of the inhabitants; whereas, in 1853, there have died of consumption one in every 158."

Dr. Trall, (American,) writes:—

"Physicians are not at all agreed as to the propriety of resorting to vaccination, as a protection from Small-Pox. . . . There is no question that it is, to a great extent, a protection from the virulence and danger of the natural Small-Pox; at the same time there is danger of inoculating the patient with some loathsome, and even worse disease, as —, or scrofula, from the impossibility of always getting a supply of matter from healthy constitutions. In either way there is a risk to incur, and it is a delicate matter for a physician to advise on a subject when both sides are hazardous. I am fully convinced that, if people could bring up their children in strict physiological habits, the non-vaccinating plan would be altogether the best.* Children reared healthily in relation to food, exercise, and ventilation, have little to fear from any disease, however contagious; they may have this (Small-Pox), but it will not endanger life, nor produce much deformity nor serious injury. I have seen, within the last year, a most horribly loathsome case of scrofulous disease, in which the patient *literally rotted alive* at the age of fifteen, from *unhealthy virus* received when he was but three years of age."

Dr. Lutze (of Anhalt) cites the experience of Rublack, Reil, Schœlein, Evertzen, Nittinger, Ferguson, and Raspail, German and French physicians, in support of the proposition that "vaccine lymph is not merely a

* As a collateral proof of the soundness of this reasoning, it may be observed that in many places in many parts of the world, Small-Pox and vaccination are equally unknown. And, further, Dr. Verdé-Delisle informs us that "the ancient authors," meaning those who wrote before the introduction of vaccination and inoculation, "were agreed that one-third of the human race were naturally exempt from Small-Pox."

vehicle of contagion for Cow-Pox, but that it propagates ringworm, itch, scrofula, and s——.”*

Dr. Verdé-Delislc, (French,) after quoting facts and statistics, almost to tedium, concludes thus :—

“ Now, let us reckon with vaccination. What service has it rendered humanity? It has shackled the organic functions, it has suppressed the vital force, it has infinitely multiplied the most terrible maladies, pulmonary consumption, scrofula, cancer, insanity, rickets, paralysis. It has even given birth to croup, and, more particularly, to *internal variola*, called typhus fever, which is now more common than eruptive small-pox. Thus, out of a vigorous and powerful nature, it has made the miserable race you see. In a word, it has deranged the mental faculties, corroded the lungs, ulcerated the intestines; it has done all that, and *yet*—it has not preserved us from Small-Pox.”†

Dr. Newman, (English,) writes :—

“ It is of the utmost consequence that the child from whom the infectious matter is communicated be perfectly healthy, and have no inherent taint of constitution; for experience has taught us that the most terrible disorders have been communicated to healthy children from being vaccinated with lymph contaminated with —, herpes, scrofula, &c., which injurious consequences might have been prevented by taking proper precaution that the matter was pure and uninitiated.”

Mr. Borham writes to Lord Lyttelton :—

“ Cambridge-terrace, Hyde-park, July 17th, 1855.

“ MY LORD,—The amendment of your Vaccination Act has been

* *La Vaccination non-seulement inutile mais dangereuse.* Par A. Lutze, M.D., Cöthen. Tr. en Français, par Ch. F. Zimpel, M.D., Pau. pp. 14, 15.

† *De la Dégénérescence physique et morale de l'espèce humaine déterminée par le Vaccin.* Paris, Charpentier, 1855, p. 144.

[This is not the hasty conclusion of a crotcheteer or partisan, but a scientific deduction from facts, observed and examined with attention in the course of thirty years' extensive practice.]

so unostentatiously and speedily hurried through the Upper House, that the profession had not an opportunity of knowing the amendments you have made, or expressing an opinion thereon.

"I think, my Lord, that every medical man ought to vaccinate those children that he has brought into the world—for many obvious reasons, it would make the object more complete. He can do so by your recent amendment; but the slight remuneration of one shilling will deter many from accepting it, and thus it will rather tend to the dissemination of other diseases *equally or more frightful than the Small-Pox.* To make this clear to you, I will illustrate it by cases that have fallen under my own observation, and *these are legion*—viz., many children are born apparently healthy, and seemingly remain so for two or three months, when an eruption breaks out upon the region of the anus, precluded from observation by the apparel, but the face and arms appear quite healthy. The district Vaccinator is deceived by the appearance of these children; they are vaccinated, fine pustules are produced, and this vitiated virus is transmitted to scores of others, who shortly after suffer from fulsome eruptions, or *the foundation is laid for scrofula or tuberculous consumption.* These children have been born of parents who were either suffering from primary or secondary — during utero-gestation; and this frightful disease, after the birth of the child, either lies dormant, or slightly shows itself about the third month, the time for vaccination. Such diseases are *most likely* to be known by the medical attendant of the family, and I humbly submit it as a strong reason for the remunerating fee to be sufficiently large to induce him to vaccinate those he attends, so that such diseases may have *less chance* of being propagated." *

Trying to the patience, doubtless, is the necessity of wading through these details; but justice to the subject must be done. The words of two more witnesses shall conclude this portion of the case.

In the course of a debate on the "Vaccination Extension Act Amendment Bill," Dr. W. Michell, M.P., "denied that vaccination was any preventative of Small-

* *Laneet*, July 29, 1854.

Pox, and (affirmed that it) was often the cause of blindness and scrofula.”*

Mr. Brady, M.P., remarked, when the annual grant of £2000 to the National Vaccine Establishment was last voted, that “at the present time the operator *had not the means of knowing* with certainty whether what he used was the true vaccine lymph; and many cases had come within his (the hon. member’s) knowledge, in which children had imbibed loathsome, and even *mortal*, diseases from having been inoculated from unhealthy persons.”†

Here are two declarations of experience which exactly coincide; yet, while Dr. Michell justly considers that the facts are conclusive, not only against compulsion but against vaccination altogether, Dr. Brady advances his statement as a reason for the employment of *more skilful* vaccinators. The absurdity of such argument is easily demonstrated; for, let the *most skilful* vaccinator have a charge of lymph placed before him, and though he study from that moment through all time, he cannot, without experiment (and in experiment lies all the danger) determine whether it be a most deadly *virus*, or simply a little harmless *pus*. Medical gentlemen grow eloquent in descanting on the absurdities of homœopathy, but, compared with this, the whole heap of infinitesimal extravagance is like a mere ant-hill at the foot of the monarch of the Alps.

There yet remains to be noticed a most serious and weighty objection to vaccination, viz., the extreme immediate danger attending the operation, though performed

* *Medical Circular*, July 26, 1854.

† *Daily News*, May 8, 1855.

by the *most skilful* practitioner, with every possible preeau-tion. That this danger is no mere phantom of diseased imagination is sufficiently and sorrowfully proved by the returns of the Registrar-General, thus :—

"In Bethnal Green, at 19, Warner Place South, on 15th July, the son of a cabinet-maker, aged seven months, died of *vaccination, erysipelas.*"

"In Mile End Town Lower, the daughter of a gentleman, aged three months, died of 'erysipelas.' The medical man states that it supervened on vaccination."

"At the German Hospital, Dalston, both on 30th March, the son of a mariner, aged ten weeks, and the son of a sugar-baker, aged thirteen weeks, died of 'general erysipelas after vaccination, effusion on the brain.' The medical attendant adds, in his certificates, that 'both these children were vaccinated on the same day in White-chapel-road, and were in the hospital two days.' *The cases appear to be such as demand investigation.*

"In Ratcliff, at 2, Devonport-street, on 6th April, the son of a coal-merchant, aged three months, died of 'erysipelas all over the body (one day), succeeding vaccination which was considered to be fine.'"*

"Good God!" exclaims Dr. Johnson, of Brighton, as well he may, after the recital of such awful facts, "are these parents to have vaccination forced on their remaining children? See, the poor mother's tears are not yet dry, and her faded cheek has not regained its colour, when another child must perhaps, by this new act, follow its little fellow to a premature grave with no better

* *Weekly Returns*, Nos. 30, Vol. XIV., and 13 and 14; Vol. XV.

"That's just a swatch o' Hornbook's way,
Thus does he poison, kill and slay,
An's weel paid for't."

For every vaccination within two miles 2s. 6d.; beyond, 3s. 6d.
—Clause XVII.

comfort than that it died in innocence. Again the heart-rent mother will have to watch the first day's feverish excitement and the cold shills of the little one; again the loss of appetite and dull eyes, surrounded by its red network of blood; again see her child toss its tiny arms as the burning pain of that fiery demon, erysipelas, consumes and devours it. The blush of red once more announces, not that the mother has lost a child, but that, this time, she is childless. Thus for the young; but what must we say about the adult: must we behold strong healthy men that never knew sickness in their lives brought suddenly to the bed of suffering and death for fear of an attack they never would be subject to; and many are the strong and vigorous men who have suddenly succumbed to an erysipelas that would have spared the more delicate and weakly. Is it consonant with our constitutional liberty thus compulsorily to endanger the lives of any one. Surely we must all have some relative, some aged and affectionate mother, or sister whom we should hardly like to see subject even to the chance of such violence as erysipelas might inflict upon them. Oh! for Heaven's sake let us pause before we pass so infamous a bill. Let us think a little before we consign even a few among us to the chance of an early grave."*

But Mr. Cowper seems determined to proceed; it therefore behoves us now to turn, with some sense of relief, from the medical to the political portion of the subject, which need not long detain us.†

* *Brighton Guardian*, January 2, 1856.

† The conduct of the authorities in connexion with this subject is open to the gravest suspicion and reprehension. Thus, the Registrar-General, according to the *Times* of Feb. 20, states that "five deaths from Small-Pox took place in the Woolwich Royal Ordnance

It was not to be expected that the Act of 1853, so soon as its arbitrary character became known, should pass without protest. Accordingly we find one writing early in 1854 :—“The Compulsory Vaccination Act, while dishonouring science, invades in the most odious, tyrannical, and unexampled manner the liberty of the subject and the sanctity of home ; unspeakably degrades the freeborn citizen, not only in depriving him of liberty of choice in a personal matter, but even in denying him the possession of reason ; outrages some of the finest feelings and best affections of the human heart ; sets at nought parental authority and responsibility, and coerces the parent either to violate his deliberate, cherished, and conscientious convictions, and even his religious scruples, or boldly to defy an unjust and tyrannous law.”*

About the same time the Committee of the Royal Jennerian Vaccine Institution published their Report for 1853, in which they denounce compulsion as a presumptuous interference with the inevitable progress of truth, and an unwarrantable aggression on the right of private judgment, directing especial attention to the introducer of the Bill thus :—“It seems strange that Lord Lyttelton, who parentaged the Vaccine Act of last session, should have acted so contrary to the teachings of his late chief,

Hospital. Two of the men had marks of Cow-Pox ; two, it is said, died after vaccination.” Does this mean that four out of the five patients were “protected” by vaccination ? If so, why use the language of doubt and mystification ? Again, the Board of Health have printed and circulated two Reports of the Epidemiological Society, remarkable in an extraordinary degree for error in data and absurdity in deduction, while they have carefully concealed all other communications.

* *Our Medical Liberties.*

Sir Robert Peel. This great statesman, when it was proposed to make vaccination compulsory, as it is in some despotic countries, objected, remarking that such a proceeding would be so opposite to the mental habits of the British people, and the freedom of opinion in which they rightly gloried that he could be no party to such compulsion."

A correspondent of the *Durham Chronicle* writes with reference to Mr. Brady's Bill, of last Session, the remarks being equally applicable to Mr. Cowper's :—"The smallest probable cost of this 'system' of vaccination is £100,000 per annum. Now, for whose benefit is this large amount of public money to be expended ?

"Certainly it is not for the benefit of those who believe in vaccination, since, for many years past, there has been no difficulty in getting the operation efficiently and cheaply, or even gratuitously, performed.

"Still more certainly it is not for the benefit of those who do *not* believe in vaccination, and who regard the *existing* act as an utterly abominable infringement on their rights as parents and as men.

"Let the question be repeated,—For whose benefit is this large amount of money to be annually raised by fee or by fine ?

"The answer is inevitable. There remain only the prospective recipients of the 'adequate remuneration' so carefully provided.

"To pronounce a sentence of condemnation on an entire class of one's fellow countrymen is no pleasant task, more especially when that class consists of the members of a profession as arduous and as noble as any in civilized life ; but, if these gentlemen, through indifference or apathy, in such a case verging upon criminality,

continue to allow themselves to be represented, or misrepresented, by persons so ambitious, unscrupulous, and unreasoning, as the executive of the Epidemiological Society, they must not be surprised should an injured and insulted people fail to draw nice distinctions between the active and passive promoters of a system of legislation opposed equally to the spirit of the constitution, the dictates of common sense, and the opinions of the most eminent of modern statesmen.

"What, then, shall they do to be saved ! One course only seems to be open. Let them frankly and cordially unite with all their high-minded, right-hearted countrymen in such a public expression of opinion as shall effectually strengthen the hands of those members of the legislature who desire to preserve the dignity of British liberty,* and enable them, not only to prevent the passage of the measure about to be brought forward, but to obtain the repeal of the arbitrary law which at present disgraces our Statute Book."†

To disbelievers in vaccination another word need not be addressed : but I will suppose, sir, or madam, that you believe in vaccination, and will ask,—What obstacle removable by Act of Parliament, has there been in the way of submitting your children to the operation ? None whatever. In what way has the existing Act improved your condition in this respect—in what way will the proposed Act improve it ? None whatever. Suppose, further, that a few medical men in London, self-appointed, and totally irresponsible, reported *against* vaccination and

* Dr. Michell, Mr. Barrow, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Frewen, Mr. T. S. Duncombe, Sir Geo. Strickland.

† *Durham Chronicle*, February 1, 1856.

induced Government to interdict the practice under a considerable fine. What would you say to that? Would you not instantly assert your right of choice in a matter so purely personal? Most assuredly you would. Now this—this right of choice—is all that the objectors to compulsory vaccination contend for. Assist them, then—make common cause with them—and let there come from all parts of the country such a unanimous and decided expression of opinion as shall convince presumptuous zealots that the people will no longer submit to their dictatorial folly, and compel them to abandon the course of aggression which they have already too long pursued.

THE END.